



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

Let the opponent of such a provision for the poor—if any reflecting person in the country can on public grounds be opposed to it—let him, we say, contemplate the hard lot of the labouring classes, compelled by the importunities of beggars not only to give up a considerable share of the food actually insufficient for themselves, but also to divide their beds or their children's beds with persons of the lowest habits, and thus see their families deprived of food, of rest, health, and morality; while a large number of the wealthy classes remained listless and inaccessible within their closed doors, or were exercising their better feelings in a distant land.

We do not accuse the wealthy members of society, as a class, with indifference to the wants of the poor: we but refer to a contrast between *their* security against the intrusion of mendicants, and the defenceless state of the labouring classes—a contrast which doubtless must have been ever present to the mind of the poor working man: and we do this to show how much the wealthy will gain by a law which provides safe means for its application in relieving poverty.

The expense, then, which we are now incurring, is not a new charge, but a wise and equitable distribution of one heretofore borne by portions of the community in very disproportionate shares, without having any tendency to obviate the mendicancy by which it was created, but, on the contrary, having a direct tendency to foster and increase that most demoralizing of all the conditions in life.

Be the expense what it may, it cannot tend to induce a more extensive reliance on the public provision than mendicancy has encouraged: nay, we maintain, that when the law shall have been for a short time in full and general operation, the number of unemployed and dependent poor will gradually decline. But expectation must have a little patience: the machinery for sustaining in orderly and decent comfort upwards of one hundred thousand human beings, cannot be created otherwise than by a very gradual process. This is not a clime in which men and families can be encamped: when they are to be lodged, durable structures must be provided, and for this work much time is necessary. We are sure that no time has been lost; nay, we regard the progress made as among the most accelerated public labours of this or any other country.

In the mean time, the law is not without working out much good for the labouring classes. Workmen of every grade have been busily employed in the construction of work-houses since the spring of 1839, for which object government has advanced upwards of a million of money, free of interest, for ten years after the commencement of relief in each Union.

We are, however, reasoning without having an argument opposed to us; for any thing like argument against the law we have not heard. In Dublin it is merely complained, that although houses are open and rates levied, the mendicants still throng the streets. But it is not shown that any thing like the same number of apparently deserving objects of relief are to be seen; they on the contrary are in the work-houses, maintained by the rates; and were it not for the poor children whom the mendicants drag along with them, the imposture would soon be stopped by its own want of success.

The policy of the law contemplates the repression of beggary and vagrancy, and all those disorders and crimes which accompany or have their origin in those habits—the encouragement of a more productive industry—the more universal recognition of the identity of interest amongst all classes affected by the law—and with the cordial co-operation of all the intelligent classes of society which it has hitherto received, and will probably receive yet further hereafter—there cannot be a doubt but that the law, when in full operation, will realize all this, and more.

To those who wish for an exemplification of the favourable working of the law, we recommend the perusal of a little work lately published under the title of "Benevola," in which the English and Irish systems of relief are well contrasted, and the tendency of the Irish provision is ingeniously exemplified. To those who will not be satisfied without a practical exemplification, we can only recommend patience; but we will say—Do not in the mean time forget the cost and other deplorable evils of Irish mendicancy.

F.

THE PILGRIM AT THE WELL.

The fountain is gleaming in morning light,
But there kneels beside it a child of night;
For to her the summers no sunshine bring;
Oh! what doth she seek at that blessed spring?
The home of her youth she has left afar,
And the promise of light was her spirit's star;
But her perils and pilgrimage all are past,
And that hallowed fount she hath found at last.
For they said that a spell in its waters lay,
To banish the blight of her life away:
And the prayer of her faith it grows fervent now,
While signing the cross upon breast and brow.
Oh! stranger of darkness, kneel not there.
Tho' the fountain with freshness fills the air,
And its waters are sweet as the summer rain,
But they cannot give thee the day again.
Yet, tell us, ye searching ones and wise,
Oh! whence did these ancient dreams arise
Of the holy and hidden things, which still
Were mighty to heal all human ill?
They were stars that blest in their hour of might,
And gems that shone with a saving light;
They were trees of life in the trackless wilds,
And the sea had its own immortal isles;
And through all her changes, the world's hope clings
To the healing power of her sacred springs;
For around them the faith of nations hung,
And sages have trusted, and poets sung,
And pilgrims have sought them by night and day,
Over mountain and desert far away;
But they sought in vain in the earth or seas,
Oh, tell us whence are such dreams as these!
Say, are they of some far deathless clime,
Thus casting its shadows of hope on time;
Or voices of promise, sent before
The day when earth's curse shall be no more?
We know not but life hath the cloud and pall,
And woe for the heart's hope, more than all,
For its precious seed in the fruitless ground,
And its bread on the waters never found.
Oh! is there not many a weary heart,
That hath seen the greenness of life depart,
Yet trusted in vain in a powerless spell,
Like her who knelt by the Holy Well!

F. B.

NATURE'S WONDERS.

THE GADFLY.

THE study of natural history is one which, independent of the charm it possesses to the inquisitive and contemplative mind, in affording food for the cultivation of the highest qualities of the intellect, is also beneficial in a moral point of view, as it insensibly brings the cultivator of it to contemplate the power and goodness of his Creator. It leads his thoughts from the petty affairs of life, and, making him look with admiration and a feeling of love on every manifestation of the Divine power which surrounds him, instils into his mind one of the strongest principles of action desired by the Almighty—a feeling of universal benevolence.

There cannot be a better illustration of this latter effect which I have mentioned the study of natural history produces on the mind, than that afforded us by the history of the birth and after life of the insect I have headed this article with—"the Gadfly." Strange and wonderful though the transformations be to which the butterfly and many other individuals of the insect world are subject, those of this little creature far surpass them all.

Many of my readers are well acquainted with that fly which in the latter part of summer is seen to be so annoying to the horse, buzzing about him, and every now and then dashing itself with some degree of violence against his sides and legs. This motion, to all appearance, is without design; but a closer study of the habits of the insect will show that, far from being the effect of chance, it is one of paramount importance to the existence of the fly, as on it depends the continuation of its species.

If attentively observed, it will be found that it is the female of this fly alone who resorts to this peculiar motion; this she does to deposit her eggs in the hair of the horse, to which they at once become attached by a gelatinous fluid surrounding them; by this mucus they are enabled to retain their hold for a few days, during which time they are fitted

to be hatched, and the slightest touch will liberate a little worm they contain. The horse, in resorting to the common practice of licking himself, breaks the egg, and the small worm contained in it adhering to the tongue of the animal, is conveyed with the food into the stomach; there it clings by means of hooks placed at either side of its mouth, and its hold is so tenacious that it will be broken before it can be detached. Here, in this strange abode, changing as it were its nature in becoming a parasite, it remains for the whole of the winter, feeding on the mucus of the stomach. At the end of the ensuing spring, having reached its full perfection in this secondary state, led by that instinct which regulates all the animated creation, from man to a monad, it detaches itself from the cuticular coat, and is carried into the vilous portion of the stomach with the food, passes out of it with the chyme, and is at length evacuated with the feces. The larva or maggot, now a second time changing its nature, seeks shelter in the ground, and after some time becomes a chrysalis; in that helpless state it lies for some weeks, when, bursting from its deathlike sleep, it wakes into life and activity in the form of a perfect fly.

There is hardly a parallel to this wonderful chain of causes and effects, and effects and causes, to be met with in all the varied and mysterious workings of nature; scarcely one which exhibits so many acts apparently so unconnected with the ultimate results.

V.

IRISH ODDITIES.—No. I.

SNAP RIVERS.

JACK RIVERS should have been a gentleman. His family, his property, his early education, entitled him to that dignity. Jack was not a gentleman; with perverted views of ambition he spurned the distinction, and gloried in the well-merited title of knave. Many loftier and nobler minds have been reduced to even a lower point of moral degradation by early indulgence in gross licentious habits. Such was not the case with Jack. Immoderate sensual gratification ranked not in the catalogue of his crimes. He was no toper; was a married man at twenty, and a faithful husband all his life. Yet, Jack was an acknowledged, nay, more, a professed knave, though neither a lover of money nor a spendthrift. Shakspeare, it is said, ransacked all nature, and left almost no character untouched; yet neither in his historical portraits, the etchings of his own times, nor his prophetic creations, has he given us a picture that at all resembled *Snap Rivers*, the faithfully expressive soubriquet assumed by our hero. Nature, whimsical nature, must have been in her drollest mood—must have been actually studying the *picturesque* when she cast his nativity. He certainly was a model for an artist in that line, for he stood six feet six inches by military standard, was extremely slender, rejoiced in the possession of a hatchet face ornamented with the most splendid Roman nose imaginable, illumined by two small ferret eyes, squinting fiercely inwards, which gave to his countenance the most sinister expression possible. Quite aware of the value of these natural advantages, Jack's genius and striking taste in dress added considerably to their effect. It was his invariable custom through life to wrap his outer man in a long blue cloak, a garment little used in his day. Summer and winter, a pair of blue rib-and-fur woollen stockings encased his spindle legs, gartered above the knee beneath a pair of gun-mouthed unmentionables; a red nightcap ever maintained its conspicuous place on his elevated poll, while an immense fire-shovel or clerical hat gave a finish to his unique and matchless appearance. He possessed one other accomplishment: he was afflicted—poh!—blessed with a most inveterate stammer in his speech: a word in speaking he could not utter without the most frightful contortion of countenance, and unintelligible splutter, splutter, splutter. Yet, no one of his attributes did he turn to such beneficial effect as this; for when he either wished to gain time, or baffle an opponent, forth came a torrent of manting sounds in all their horrid grandeur, and he who could quell the feelings of pity could rarely resist the ready propensity to laugh at the ludicrous exhibition; so Jack was generally successful. But, notwithstanding this great natural defect, whenever he pleased he could make himself well understood, by falling back upon a species of recitative, or musical method of speaking, peculiar to himself, and always commencing with a loud “ho! ho!” which gave timely warning to all his ac-

quaintances that he was about to favour them with his own sentiments in his own style. One circumstance of his early life must be mentioned, as it may have given a bent to his mind in after years. At the early age of seventeen he had deserted his respectable and happy home, and found himself a private in a dragoon regiment. The act broke his father's heart. So, having spent three years in that admirable school of morality, Jack purchased out, and returned to his young wife, as well as to the possession of a snug £400 a-year, which fell into his hands by hereditary descent.

Constituted as his mind then was, his principles soon began to develop themselves, and to afford a strong contrast to those which had governed the actions of his father. That he shortly became dreaded by all his neighbours, may be admitted; that he would and did overreach every man with whom he had business transactions, was an admitted fact, because it was his own proud boast; and when checked by his friends for those admissions, he would boldly reply, “Ho! ho! woo-ood you have me tit-tit-too put my lil-lighted ca-handle under a bu-hushal?” But that he was hated, or even disrespected in consequence of his acts, has no foundation in reality. There was nothing mean or grovelling about his knavery—all was above-board, done in clear day-light. There was nothing selfish or avaricious about him; the glory of the deed was all he aimed at, for every body knew he would prefer gaining a pound by open imposition, to the receipt of ten by honourable means. He never used a soothing phrase to human being. He seemed to court the hostility of his species, yet that would not come; for notwithstanding his profane and coarse salutations, he had a humane heart, and a short time sufficed to unmask it. The poor never went hungry from his door, and a distressed acquaintance had a certain resource while there was a penny in the purse of *Snap Rivers*. He was as welcome to his cash as to his bitterest malediction, and that was ever ready for either friend or foe. But the insolent great man, or the would-be important, who aped a dignity to which he had no fair claim, was the object of his deep immitigable hate; with such he could hold no terms; and did such ever cross his path, he would plot for months till he would circumvent him in some shape. Did ever Shakspeare light on such a character? Yet, notwithstanding all these seeming contradictions, a single trait has not been here placed to his account that was not in a degree beyond description truly his.

On one occasion Jack was invited to an evening party in the house of his brother-in-law, a plain honest man, an extensive farmer, wealthy and respectable, in every point the very antithesis of his eccentric relative. The district was remarkable for the peace and harmony which prevailed throughout its entire population. Party strife and sectarian animosity were here totally unknown, while intermarriages among all sects cemented a union and fostered a spirit of Christian charity and forbearance, which, while it ameliorated the heart and breathed peace around it, shed also a lustre on the humble community beyond the dignity which vain pomp confers on the fleeting distinctions which gorgeous wealth creates.

But Jack was an invited guest; so was his own amiable minister, the virtuous and respected Protestant rector, Mr B—; so was Dr D—, a pretty tolerable wag; and so was the Rev. Mr K—, the parish priest, between whom and the rector there existed a sincere unfeigned friendship. The priest had studied in France; was a man of high attainments, polished manners, possessed a vast fund of sparkling wit, with as ready and as happy an expression as ever distinguished man; but his brilliant qualities were ever under the control of strict decorum, and, further, restrained by a lofty sense of that dignity which should inhege the minister of religion. He was consequently an especial favourite with all classes, and an honoured guest at every social board. No man revered him more than Snap Rivers, and none was more anxious, or better knew how, to draw out his conversational powers.

The party was all assembled with the exception of our hero, and as his presence and pungent remarks always contributed to the hilarity of his friends, the kind-hearted host was not half satisfied with his absence. “What the devil's keeping Jack?” had just escaped from Mr Anderson's tongue, as the door opened, and the head and shoulders of Snap Rivers made their welcome appearance. When he had fairly entered the room, he raised himself to his full height, stared deliberately around him, pulled off his hat with some attempt at grace, and exclaimed in his own fashion, “Ho! ho! a goo-hoodly company, by Ju-hupiter! Ho! ho! the bla-hack-coats!”